<u>REMARKS</u>

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 25 have been amended. Support for the amendments is provided for example in Fig. 4 and its accompanying description in the specification. The amendment was not presented earlier due to the unforeseeability of the remarks presented in the Final Rejection. (It should be noted that references herein to the specification and drawings are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the referenced embodiments.)

Claims 1-10, 12-22, and 25 were rejected, under 35 USC §102(b), as being anticipated by El-Gamal et al. (US 2001/0034868). To the extent that these rejections may be deemed applicable to the amended claims presented herein, the Applicants respectfully traverse as follows.

Claim 1 now defines a method of encoding an information bit sequence forming a code block. According to this method, the k bits of the information bit sequence are distributed among n code block segments, having bit lengths k1 to kn, and one or more code block segments is supplemented with additional information bits so as to obtain at least two code block segments of different lengths. Each code block segment is then individually encoded. The claimed subject matter provides an advantage of increasing the error correction capability of received data through repetition coding (see specification page 3, lines 16-32).

El-Gamal does not disclose the Applicants' claimed subject matter of varying the length of a code block segment, so as to obtain two code block segments of different lengths, and encoding these different length code block segments.

The Final Rejection proposes that El-Gamal discloses, in Fig. 5, the instant claimed subject matter of distributing the k bits of an information bit sequence among n code block segments, having bit lengths k1 to kn (see Final Rejection page 4, second bullet). More specifically, the Final Rejection proposes that reference characters 206, 208, and 210 identify three code block segments.

El-Gamal discloses that each of code block segments u_A 206, u_B 208, and u_C 210 contains exactly eight bits of data (see El-Gamal paragraphs [0054]-[0057], and paragraph [0046], lines 7-12). El-Gamal's coordinated interleaver 502 interleaves code block segments u_A 206, u_B 208, and u_C 210 to produce interleaved code block segments v_A 504, v_B 506, and v_C 508, which are respectively encoded by encoders 218, 220, and 222 (see paragraphs [0062]-[0071]).

However, each of El-Gamal's interleaved code block segments v_A 504, v_B 506, and v_C 508, which are provided to encoders 218, 220, and 22 for encoding, also has exactly eight bits of data (see paragraphs [0063], [0069], and paragraph [0046], lines 7-12).

Because each of El-Gamal's interleaved code block segments v_A 504, v_B 506, and v_C 508, which are subsequently encoded, has eight bits of data, it necessarily follows that El-Gamal cannot disclose the Applicants' claimed subject matter of varying the length of a code block segment, so as to obtain two code block segments of different lengths, and encoding these different length code block segments.

Accordingly, the Applicants submit that El-Gamal does not identically disclose all the limitations of claim 1 and, thus, does not anticipate this claim. Independent claim 25 now similarly recites the above-mentioned subject matter distinguishing method claim 1 from El-Gamal, but with respect to an apparatus. Therefore, allowance of claims 1 and 25 and all claims dependent therefrom is warranted.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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